



# Sunbury College Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Sunbury College is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

## CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Student rights and responsibilities
5. Student behavioural expectations
6. School Actions and Consequences
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

## POLICY

### 1. School profile

Sunbury College is a vibrant, cohesive and inclusive school located 35km (about 30 minutes' drive) from the CBD in Melbourne's north-west growth corridor. The college holds the values of respect, responsibility, resilience and endeavour as guiding principles. It has a focus on the academic growth, personal development and general wellbeing of each student. It is greatly valued by its local community of Sunbury and surrounds, and is experiencing growing enrolments.

The student enrolment is currently 1100. The staff are in the main a mixture of mature, experienced teachers in the expert range along with a number of graduates providing the school with an energetic mix. Our staff are committed, professional and collaborative. They value continuous improvement and development.

A comprehensive curriculum is offered from years 7-12, including VET options, and the college is organised around these sub-schools (Years 7-8, 9-10, 11-12) and four houses. The college has well established co-curricular programs with high interest and success in sport, the performing arts, student leadership and student engagement activities.

Sunbury College is set on eight hectares and has well-established facilities in the final stages of being modernised. Our new classrooms and science building are now fully established.

Our strategic directions going forward have a strong emphasis on pedagogical development and on student agency and voice in their learning. In the area of student pathways and transition the college aims to provide a post compulsory program, counselling and advice that maximises the further education, training and employment options for all students. As part of its focus on student engagement and wellbeing, the college has undertaken to provide a supportive and productive learning environment supported by positive student and teacher relationships that promotes overall well-being and engaged, motivated learners with a strong sense of connection to the school community

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

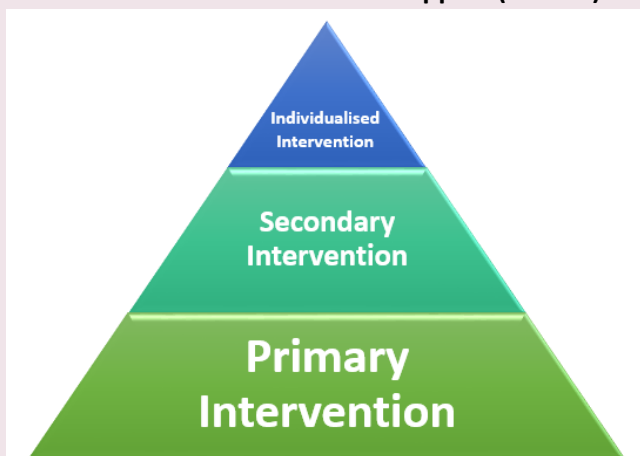
Sunbury College's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, responsibility, resilience and endeavour at every opportunity.

Sunbury College envisions our students as engaged learners and independent thinkers that are met at point of need as partners in their learning – where education matters, emotional, social and physical wellbeing is nurtured, and pathways for all students are maximized.

*Our Statement of Values and School Philosophy is available online at <https://www.sunburysc.vic.edu.au/college/policies-reports/>*

## 3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

### School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)



The provision of a positive environment for learning underpins improved engagement, wellbeing and learning outcomes for all students. In 2018 Sunbury College began implementing the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) approach. Over the next three years it developed the underpinning whole school framework for creating a safe and supportive environment for students, staff and the wider college community.

The SWPBS framework promotes and maintains a safe and orderly learning environment that focuses on establishing a consistent approach to behaviour management and positive recognition of acceptable behaviours within all settings, all of the time. We recognise that learning social skills and socially acceptable behaviours requires positive role modelling. The staff at Sunbury College is committed to leading by example.

### **Connect program**

The CONNECT program was introduced for 2016. Its main focus is around whole school *engagement*, improved *wellbeing* and increased *academic* outcomes.

Each Connect group is made of approximately 22 students from their year level. In years 10-12 these students typically are from the same house. Each session is conducted by a member of staff who is intended to be a significant adult and advocate for the student at school.

### **Learning Program Year 7 (Lp7)**

The LP7 program was designed to support student transition from primary to secondary school. Students are allocated to a significant teacher who becomes their primary teacher for the year across at least two of English, Mathematics, Science and Humanities. They manage their class and liaise regularly with parents via the Compass portal. Significant teachers are housed in the one office within the year 7 designated area of the school, providing easy access for students. They operate an open office policy where students can work with teachers at lunch break. Student lockers are in the one area and the cohort has designated coordinators.

### **Child safe**

We are committed to ensure our staff are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect and to support a culture where all children feel, physically and emotionally, safe and healthy.

The school has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people, and their parent/care giver. We encourage parent/care giver involvement and engagement that informs school operations and builds the capacity of children and parents/care givers to understand their rights and responsibilities.

The child safe policy sets out Sunbury College's approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe. This policy provides the framework for the school's approach to the Child Safety Standards.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and members of the college council.

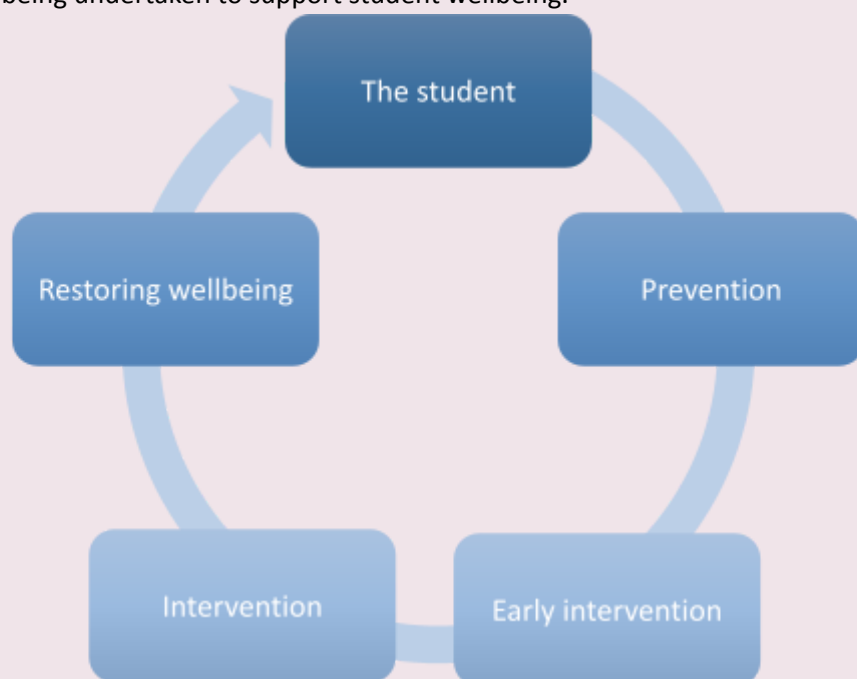
The policy applies across a range of school forums including, but not exclusive to, college campus, camps, excursions, online and both within and outside of school hours.

### **Respectful relationships**

Sunbury College is committed to embedding the philosophies of the Respectful Relationships initiative into our daily lives - respect, gender equality, healthy relationships, resilience and confidence. Our aim is to entrench in our school community behaviours and curriculum that will have a positive impact on our students' academic outcomes, their mental health, classroom behaviour, and relationships between teachers and students.

## **1. College Wellbeing Framework**

Our Framework for student support includes four interrelated levels encompassing the wide range of activities being undertaken to support student wellbeing.



### Wellbeing Personnel

At Sunbury College student wellbeing is the responsibility of all staff. All the personnel listed below have explicit responsibilities for student wellbeing as part of their role and ensure access for students to high quality wellbeing and support services.

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Leading Teachers – Sub Schools
- Student Wellbeing coordinator
- Mental Health Professional
- Student Engagement Officers
- Year Level Coordinators
- Careers and Pathways Coordinator
- Connect teachers
- Integration coordinator
- Integration teachers

### Prevention

Sunbury College recognises the importance of primary prevention. It is an inclusive approach that engages with young people and acknowledges their rights and responsibilities to influence their social, emotional and school environment. The aim is:

- To encourage a sense of belonging
- To promote student wellbeing
- To raise awareness of what makes students resilient, and to develop strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and increase coping skills
- To implement strategies for whole groups, such as school or year level

Strategies include:

- Relationship based classroom management
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support
- College Instructional Model – GENAR
- College Teaching and Learning Framework
- Connect program
- Purposeful teaching
- Comprehensive curriculum
- Work Experience
- Transition
- Inclusion programs
- Leadership programs
- Respectful Relationships program
- Extra-curricular activities
- Community programs

### **Identifying students in need of support**

Sunbury College will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- Work Habit Ratings (progress reports)
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- homework club or other extracurricular activities

### **Early Intervention**

Early intervention is focused on groups that are at higher risks of harm and aims to improve their resilience through effective and appropriate support programs and treatment. Strategies are targeted at students displaying inappropriate choice of coping skills, stress reaction, depressive symptoms and other personal and social vulnerabilities. There are a number of risk factors that increase the chance of adolescents developing health and behaviour problems. We need to be aware of the risk factors, while increasing protection throughout the course of young people's development. Identification of students in need will be greatly assisted by relationship based classroom management. The aim is:

- To develop emotional competency
- To strengthen resilience and coping skills
- To reduce the risk behaviour for those with social, emotional and/or physical issues
- To improve the identification, assessment and management of students at risk

There will be ongoing evaluation of appropriate strategies. Strategies include:

- Emotional management groups
- Inclusive practices groups
- Literacy & numeracy programs
- Social skills groups
- Student focus groups
- Case management of students at risk

### **Intervention**

At Sunbury College we recognise students may encounter a range of difficulties needing intervention. Issues around mental health, learning, family difficulties and breakdown, abuse and neglect, sexual identity, drug misuse and eating disorders may require short term or ongoing support. The aim is:

- To provide effective counselling and support within the College to students in crisis
- To arrange referrals to ensure access to affordable and appropriate counselling, care and treatment services
- To encourage ongoing professional development for those dealing with students at crisis point

Strategies include:

- Individual counselling and case management
- Individual Behavioural Management/Education Plans
- Referral to educational psychologists
- Referral to speech pathologist/ visiting teachers
- Learning support
- Support from integration and / or inclusive practices
- Referral to, and liaison with, external agencies
- Contact with families
- Mandatory reporting
- Disabilities and impairment program

### **Restoring Wellbeing**

Restoring wellbeing is the work carried out to deal with the aftermath of traumatic incidents in order to assist the survivors to cope with what has happened and to reduce the chances of further trauma, including suicide attempts. Preparedness, appropriate response and recovery activities can mitigate the impact of trauma related symptoms and facilitate the ongoing development of resilience. The aim is:

- To provide appropriate support to students, their families and other members of the school community affected by traumatic incidents, particularly those involved in death due to suicide, accident or illness
- To limit the impact of trauma

Strategies include:

- The College Emergency Management
- Plan counselling support
- Involvement of DET Emergency Response Team
- Referral to appropriate mental health providers

#### 4. Student rights and responsibilities

At Sunbury College we expect high standards of student behaviour based on cooperation, mutual responsibility and self discipline. We promote positive, non-discriminatory relationships among students, parents, staff and the wider community. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher, their year level coordinator or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

#### 5. Student behavioural expectations

Sunbury College has developed shared expectations to ensure that the learning, safety and rights of all are respected. The expectations are intended to be positive in that they set out what is expected and appropriate behaviours for our school community. Our shared expectations are intended to support individual students and families that come to our community from a diversity of backgrounds, communities and experiences.

<b>Engagement</b>	<p>The school leadership team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Uphold the right of every child to receive an education up to the compulsory age of schooling</li><li>● Ensure the school complies with its duty of care obligations to each student as well as its obligations under the equal opportunity and human rights legislation</li><li>● Identify the diversity of the school community and deliver teaching and learning, educational and extra-curricular activities and community services inclusive and responsive to student needs</li></ul> <p>The staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Develop flexible pedagogical styles to engage different learners</li><li>● Deliver curriculum and assessment that challenges and extends students learning</li><li>● Develop positive relationships with students that promote engagement, wellbeing and learning</li><li>● Provide opportunities for student voice developing a positive school culture</li></ul> <p>All students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Respect, value and learn from the differences of others</li><li>● Have high expectations that they can learn</li></ul>
-------------------	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reflect on and learn from their own differences</li> </ul> <p>Parents/carers are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support the school’s efforts to educate young people to live in a diverse world by promoting an understanding and appreciation of diversity in the home</li> <li>● Help the school to provide student-centered responses by providing all relevant information to the school</li> <li>● Actively participate in supporting their child’s learning by building a positive relationship with the school</li> <li>● Work with the school through attendance at parent-teacher meetings and responding to communications in a timely manner</li> </ul>
<b>Attendance</b>	<p>In compliance with Departmental procedures school staff will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote regular attendance with all members of the school community and</li> <li>● Monitor and follow up on absences</li> </ul> <p>All students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Come to school every school day throughout the year. (If students cannot attend their parents/carer must provide a suitable explanation to the school)</li> <li>● Parents/carers are expected to:</li> <li>● Ensure that enrolment details for their children are correct, that their children attend school regularly</li> <li>● Advise the school as soon as possible when a child is absent from school</li> </ul>
<b>Behaviour</b>	<p>The school leadership team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support and promote positive behaviours by developing and implementing shared behavioural expectations with the school community through a staged response</li> <li>● Lead and promote preventative approaches to behavioural issues</li> <li>● Monitor the profile of behaviour issues at the school and the effectiveness of implemented strategies</li> <li>● Provide professional development for staff to build their capacity to promote positive behaviours.</li> </ul> <p>The staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use Student Engagement policy as a basis for negotiating class-based shared expectations with students</li> <li>● Teach students social competencies through curriculum content and pedagogical approach</li> <li>● Employ behaviour management strategies that reflect the behaviours expected from students</li> <li>● Build a collegiate atmosphere with other school staff to share strategies and support each other to reflect on one’s own behaviour management approach</li> </ul> <p>All students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support each other’s learning by behaving in a way that is curious and respectful</li> <li>● Have high expectations that they can learn</li> <li>● Be considerate and supportive of others</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Demonstrate behaviour and attitudes that support the wellbeing and learning for all and contributes to a positive college environment that safe, inclusive and happy</li> <li>● Understand that bullying, including cyber-bullying, violence, property damage, inappropriate language and disrupting the learning of other students is unacceptable</li> </ul> <p>Parents/carers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Understand the school’s behavioural expectations</li> <li>● Aim to provide a consistent approach that supports their child’s learning and engagement in and out of school</li> </ul>
--	---

Strategies used to support shared expectations of positive relationships and learning include:

- Teaching practices which are inclusive of all members of the community to ensure the learning experiences for all students are equitable and viable
- A whole school curriculum program which is accessible, engaging, and challenging for all students and provides a wide range of choice
- The school working in partnership with the student and parent community to ensure they are informed and have opportunities for input into whole school decision making.
- Having in place a well resourced and managed house structure, in conjunction with a well being and careers team, to provide for the support, wellbeing and pathways of all students.
- Having clear expectations in the Student Code of Conduct, and other codes of conduct, of expected behaviours, and logical consequences which are understood and supported by all involved, if conduct does not meet expectations.
- The development of a School Wide Positive Behaviour Support program

## 6. School actions and consequences

The College follows a Restorative Practice model in dealing with student management issues. The aim is to address the issue, restore a positive relationship and move forward with learning. This practice involves building authentic relationships and discussing behaviour with students in a manner that facilitates understanding of expectations, repatriation of damaged relationships and renewed positivity about learning.

### **Consequences for breaches of school policy and procedures may include:**

**Removal:** When a student interferes with the learning of others in class and fails to respond to warnings given by their teacher, the teacher may decide to remove the student from class to another class. A responsible student accompanies the excluded child to the other class. A follow up time is established where the student and the teacher resolve the issue that lead to the exclusion.

**Mediation:** The College aims to restore relationships that have been impacted by student behaviour. Mediation may be in the form of a restorative practice exercise where a teacher facilitates a discussion between two or more students about an issue.

**Communication Contracts:** In some circumstances of low level harassment or bullying, an initial response is to undertake a communication contract whereby the student agrees to and signs a statement stating they will refrain from certain types of communication with a fellow student. The parent also countersigns this contact.

**Detention:** Lunch/Afterschool depending on the nature of the breach. A Principal's Detention is run on a Friday night for one hour for breaches that would normally involve a suspension but in discussion with the Year Level Coordinator the student has been given an opportunity to avoid the suspension. Failure to attend a Principal's Detention will result in the student being suspended for their original indiscretion on the following Monday. Parents are notified of afterschool and Principal's detentions.

**Parent Meetings:** Parents may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss their child's behaviour and to help in establishing strategies for improvement.

### **Restorative Practice model**

Staff are expected to communicate learning expectations to their classes outlining behaviour that if continued will result in exclusion. There is also an expectation that staff will implement student management strategies prior to exclusion.

These may include: seating plans, reminders that behaviour displayed is not acceptable discussion with a known disruptive student (s) prior to class, starting with expectations, clear learning *intentions and success criteria at the beginning of the lesson.*

### **Other means of follow up consequences can include:**

- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Sunbury College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

## **7. Engaging with families**

Sunbury College values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families

- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

## 8. Evaluation

Sunbury College will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Sunbury College will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

These are available at <https://www.sunburysc.vic.edu.au/college/policies-reports/>

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2022
Consultation	School Council July 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2024